

March 5, 2014

Ms. Stacey Benningfield
I-35 Program Manager
Texas Department of Transportation
Austin District
PO Box 15426
Austin, TX 78761-5426

Re: I-35 Capital Area Improvement Program Corridor Implementation Plan

Dear Ms. Benningfield:

Whereas the Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) is in nascent form, without official members or a chair to submit a recommendation on the group's behalf, I submit this letter to you as PAC staff reflecting the group's recommendation regarding the I-35 Capital Area Improvement Program Corridor Implementation Plan. The language of this letter was approved by those in attendance and an official vote count is included of all members of the public in the audience.

The PAC was formed in summer 2013 in order to advise City of Austin and other entities on pedestrian planning, design, funding, and enforcement efforts regarding the creation, maintenance and operation of pedestrian facilities in order to ensure a safe and enjoyable circulation for both commuting and recreation within the City of Austin. The PAC's goal is to ensure sensitivity to pedestrian issues in the design and implementation of all public and private projects impacting pedestrians.

The PAC, in discussing the current proposals by TxDOT, made reference to the vision articulated in the *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan*. The Plan, adopted summer 2012, articulates a clear vision for compact and connected development encouraging pedestrian connections and walkable places. This vision is found throughout the Plan:

*“Austin promotes safe bicycle and pedestrian access with well-designed routes that provide connectivity throughout the greater Austin area. These routes are part of our comprehensive regional transportation network.”*¹

The group expressed concerns regarding the safety and levels of pedestrian comfort of the current TxDOT proposals which do not adequately provide for safety and access along or across I-35.

¹ City of Austin. (2012). *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan*, p. 86. Retrieved from <http://assets.austintexas.gov//webiacpfullreduced.pdf>

It was further discussed the preference of the PAC is for additional designs to be pursued which provide for greater east-west pedestrian connectivity, and for designs which provide greater attention to pedestrian safety and pedestrian comfort. These design alternatives should, furthermore, be added to existing design proposals being advanced for consideration.

After consideration of the above points, the group voted 27-0 in support of additional design alternatives to be developed and added to the list of design alternatives under consideration. Additional designs should be more supportive of pedestrian access, comfort and safety.

Lastly, the PAC expressed interest in the public input process being utilized by TxDOT and in remaining involved in the design and decision-making process for the I-35 Capital Area Improvement Program Corridor Implementation Plan.

Thank you for your presentation to the Pedestrian Advisory Council and your consideration for pedestrian-friendly facilities.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the recommendations of the Pedestrian Advisory Council.

Sincerely,



Robert Anderson,
Community Transformation Grant Planner and Pedestrian Advisory Council Staff
City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department

cc: Pedestrian Advisory Council
Honorable Mayor and Council of the City of Austin
Reconnect Austin